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BY
HELEN W. LUDLOW

Reprinted from the "Southern Workman"

1907
Hampton Institute Press
Hampton, Va.

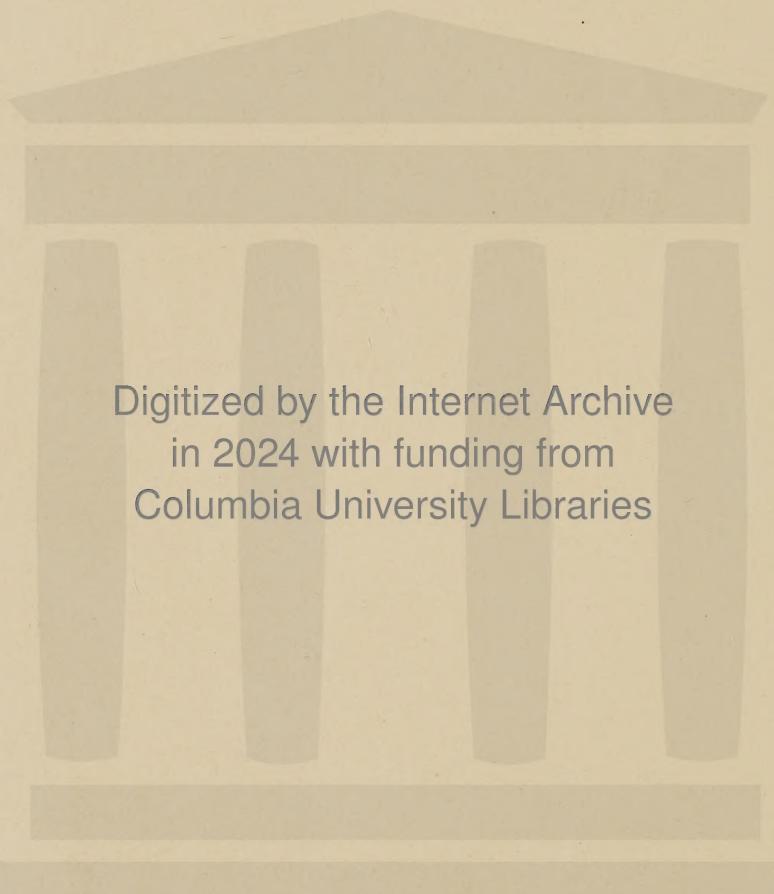
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GEORGIA'S INVESTMENT

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"Gives as the amount of property she owns, 'My two hands, head, and heart.'"—*Said of Georgia Washington in "Records of Hampton Graduates."*

"Oh rise, an' shine, an' gib God
de glory, glory!
Come on, children, don't get
weary, weary,
Rise, an' shine, an' gib God
de glory, glory,
For der—year ob—Ju—ber—lee!"

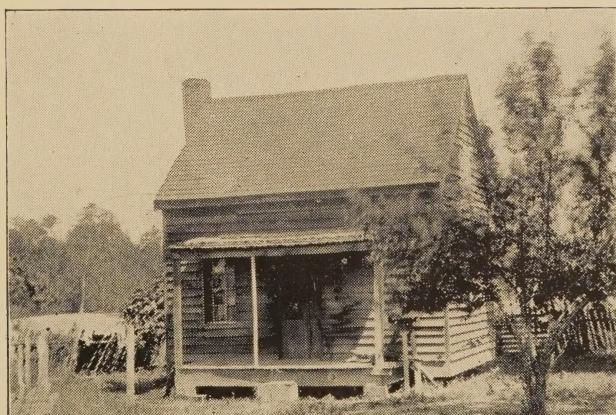


Georgia Washington

bilee glory, and passers on the city street outside stopped to listen and wonder.

Who, indeed, ever wearies of "the only American music," as Edward Everett Hale has called it; whose magic mingles passion of tropic barbarism, rapture of saint and prophet, child-hearted gayety, pathos of centuries of slavery, and ecstacy of the hour of freedom?

THE children rose and shone. Shining eyes, shining teeth, and shining brown cheeks, like new ripe chestnuts, gave back the winter afternoon sunshine that streamed in level rays through the low windowpanes; stamping feet, clapping hands, swaying bodies, and rich melodious Negro voices reflected as responsively the enthusiasm of their leader on the platform, till his dusty, crowded schoolroom seemed overflowing with the Ju-



The Cabin in Which the People's School Was Started



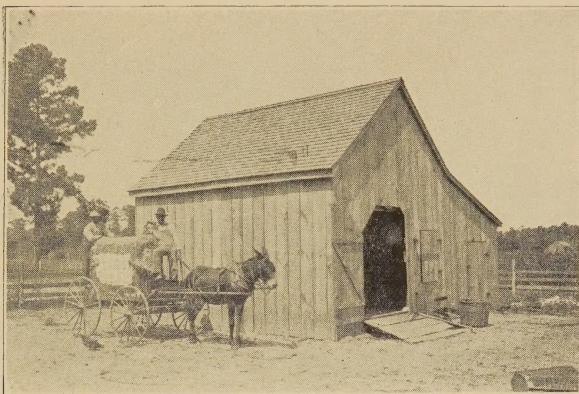
The Old Church Used as the Second Schoolhouse

But such interpreters of the Negro "spirituals" are scarcely to be found as was Joseph B. Towe, who led the children's chorus in his little schoolhouse that day—shout leader, improvisatore, a genius in his way. As second-tenor in the first band of Hampton student singers, he had gone through the North swaying cultured audiences in many cities—a Negro Orpheus. That mission ended, he was still serving his people, whose boys and girls followed him as if he were the Pied Piper, as he led them merrily, not into but over the mountains before them.

"Gwine up, gwine up,
Gwine all de way, Lord"



The Third Schoolhouse and Present Teachers' Home



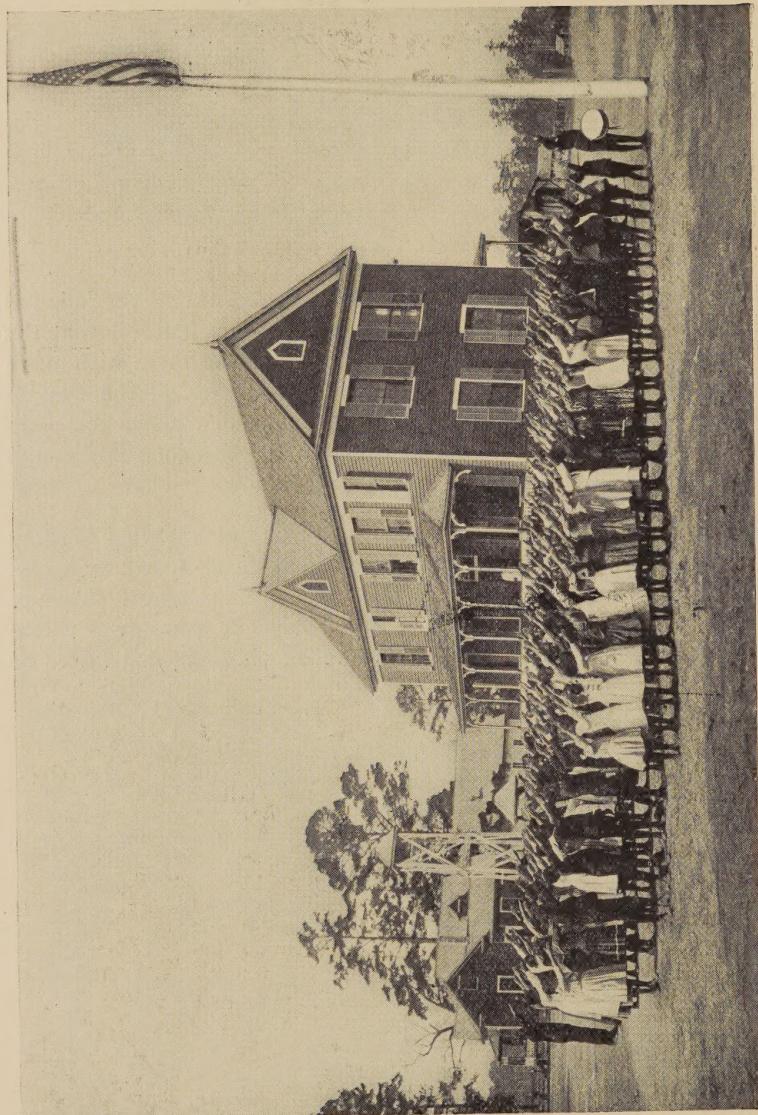
The First Bale of Cotton Raised on the School Farm

shouted the children. And then, the songs ended, their eyes followed their leader's every word and gesture as their voices had followed the stroke of his lead-pencil baton, while he explained to them with much dramatic vigor that any little pilgrim who was going all the way up would not mind scrambling over such rocks in the road as the spelling book and multiplication table. If they would follow their leader, and
“nebber, nebber tire”

he would bring them to that wonderful place of which he had so often told them, The Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute across the Roads, whose walls their teacher himself had helped sing up, where he had learned how to make two blades of grass grow where only one had grown before, and how to teach children, and where he



The Present Schoolhouse



Saluting the Flag at Mt. Meigs



The First Year's Teachers' Home Transformed into Schoolrooms

had made for himself the remarkable discovery that when you tackle it right, "grammar is not hard and stupid as you once had thought it, but is as beautiful as a little bird with its wings spread." In that wonderful school, General Armstrong, who had fought for their freedom, would show them the rest of the way up to the mountain top—the splendid height where you earn your own living, help your race,



A Company of the Mt. Meigs' Battalion

and are a good American citizen. Now "Three cheers for the Red, White, and Blue."

Before the next autumn's frosts had taken the pucker out of the persimmons, three of Teacher Towe's little train knocked at Hampton's door. One of the three was a slender, dark-faced girl in whose big, soft eyes some of the "glory, glory" was shining. Why the teachers smiled when she gave her name she did not know—a name that sounded so much larger than its bearer looked. But neither did they know, as Georgia Washington shyly took her seat in the lowest class, what light the Washington constellation was yet to shed in the Hampton firmament.

Three months after that opening day, in a far away New England home a lady sat reading a letter. She will forgive us if we look over her shoulder, it is to be hoped, for how else could we guess why now



Some of the Mt. Meigs Graduates at Hampton in 1907

and then she smiled, and now and then her eyes glistened, and when she laid it down she opened her desk and took out a check book and directed an envelope to General S. C. Armstrong. We may not need any more than she did to read the epistle's official preface in the grown-up hand, to learn that, since it seems a good idea to bring the generous donors of tuition fees into personal acquaintance with the young people whose struggles for education they are aiding, all the Hampton students are annually confronted with the duty of writing a "scholarship letter" to express in their own way their thanks for such aid, and tell in their own way something of their struggles at home and in school.

Mrs. ———,

Hampton, Va., Jan. 12, 1878.

Dear Friend:

"I was requested to write you the history of my life and I shall endeavor to do my best. Mother and father were both slaves; mother and brother and myself were sold away from father when I was quite small and I don't remember anything about him. A long time after mother was sold, I remember, the gentleman who bought her hired her out to another family twelve miles from me and I couldn't see her any more. I was there until the colored people were freed; then they all left and took me with them, and I stayed there two months; during that time I suffered, especially from hunger. I have been a whole day at a time without a mouthful of food.

"Mother heard of my being there so she sent for me; she was living twenty-five miles from me. I walked so much of the way that I became founded in my feet and was obliged to stop on my way till I got better. I reached home after awhile. Mother was very glad to see me, but I didn't recognize her at all. I had been so long away. Well, we stayed there awhile. Mother worked out by the month and I stayed home and took care of the house, at the same time she learned me to work which I am thankful for to-day. After a while mother took a notion to go back to be near her relations; she found some of them and some she has never heard from. We lived with my aunt till we could get a house; then the rent was pretty high, and everything else for that matter, for shortly after the war everything was dear.

"All this time I never had a chance to go to school, for I had to work hard to help mother pay house rent, and buy clothes and other things as far as we were able. I used to watch the children every day as they went by to school and wish that I could go. Mother learned me my alphabet and from that I learned to read the stories in the Bible, the only book any of us cared for. But that was not all I wanted to know, so I asked the lady that I lived with if she wouldn't give me a lesson every night after I was through with my work and she said she would. I was so glad I almost shouted with joy. I didn't have much time to study so I used to take my book and fasten it on my washtub and get my lesson that way, and often when I was cooking around the stove I would peep now and then in my book. But after a time she got tired hearing my lessons and said she had something else to do, but by this time I had learned to make my letters, so I was thankful to her for that.

"After awhile mother moved into the country, about three miles from the city, where we wouldn't have any wood to buy and not so much house rent to pay and there was a small piece of land, too. We got along very well from the first. I lived out by the month to cook, wash, and iron for the family who owned the house we lived in, and mother sometimes worked out by the day. I had a good home. I

stayed there four years, when mother was taken sick and had no one to help her but me. I stayed at home until she got better and then went to live with another family. I worked there twelve months.

“ During that time a nice schoolhouse was built in that county for the colored children. I thought here was another chance for me to learn something, but I didn’t dare to speak of it for I thought I was too large to go to school. My brother went every day. They had a splendid teacher, one of the Hampton singers, Mr. Joseph P. Towe; brother thought so much of him that he insisted on mother letting me go just one term, which was eight months, for he thought I would learn a good deal even in that time. Mother said she wasn’t able to send us both. But early in the fall of 1876, Mr. Towe, the teacher, was going around collecting the children to come to school, and he came to our house and asked mother to try and send me. Mother said I could not be spared like the other children, because her work was away from home every day and one of us must take care of the house. Mr. Towe succeeded in getting her to say I might go for a little while, just to learn to write, but I couldn’t stay the term out.

“ So with a very glad heart I put our home in order, cooked both breakfast and dinner early in the morning, then started for the first time in my life to school, a walk of two and a half miles. I started the middle of October and went till Christmas; hard work it was, too, for I had to do all the work at home just as if I didn’t go at all. After Christmas mother said I couldn’t go any longer for I needed clothes and she wasn’t able to buy them for me, so I must go to work. This was a bitter pill for me, for I was getting on so well in school I hated to stop, for by this time I had learned to write with pen and ink, something I thought I never would learn. I begged mother to let me go till spring, I would make out with what clothes I had till then, and she said I might. I thought myself, sometimes, I should have to give it up, but the encouraging words of our teacher, Mr. Towe, every day made me forget the hard part and only see the good things I was learning. He often told the scholars that work well done at home is just as important as lessons, and that one helps the other. Hampton was talked up every week to us, and at the close of school every one of us wanted to come. Mr. Towe said mother wouldn’t have all the money to pay, that some kind person at the North paid half of it. I told mother but she said I couldn’t go anyway for we wasn’t able, but I didn’t think that at all. I went to work as soon as school was out to cook, wash, and iron, hard work in summer, but I thought here was a chance for an education if I worked hard enough for it. Late in the fall Mr. Towe came to see if mother would let me go. She said I could go but she thought I’d have to come back home on account of my money, but she would do the best she could. So I got ready and came in October. I entered the Preparatory Class where I am trying to make the Junior Class next term.

"I work a day out of school every week to help pay my board. I am thankful to you all for your kindness in helping me to get an education. I also feel thankful to my mother and my teacher, Mr. Towe, for their kindness in sending me here. My chief desire is to get an education that I may be a help to my race. I am now in the first section of Preparatory with about sixteen members, and we are studying in long division.

"Respectfully, GEORGIE WASHINGTON."

That the Hampton School career of this ambitious little dark-faced Washington, from the few months her hard-working mother counted on, or the three or four years' course for which Georgie and her generous scholarship lady were hoping, should be lengthened out to fifteen long years of study and service, was far beyond their dreams of the future. And when she stood on the Hampton Anniversary platform on a bright May day in 1892, to tell how the unexpected had happened and what was to happen because of it, how could it seem otherwise to her than a dream of the past.

"When I entered the Preparatory Class in 1877, there were then only three hundred students here—not half so many as now. The buildings were eleven in number. We went to church service in the little Bethesda Chapel, then standing in the National Cemetery. On Monday mornings, between four and six, eight of us girls crept softly to the laundry to do our own washing first, getting through it in time for the six o'clock breakfast, and, after dishwashing, reported at seven to the laundry for our regular day's work.

"The coming of the Indians from St. Augustine in the spring of 1878 made quite a new chapter in our history. In the following term, '78-9, a second party was brought from the camps of Dakota; among them were the first girls. Some of this party were dressed in blankets and moccasins and had their faces painted. A bath and change to citizen's dress were first in order. Then they were put into rooms with the other students to learn English and the ways of civilized life. Later on, one of the graduates was asked to come and take charge of the Indian girls in their work generally. At the end of three years these first Indian girls—and boys—returned to their homes in the West and others came to take their places.

"During this long time my own struggle to get through school had been going on. My work was still in the laundry and dining room, scrubbing corridors, anything that added a penny to the credit side of my school account. How secure a Hampton student feels when the Senior Class is reached! This pleasant feeling will last as long as there is money enough to pay board bills, working out half; but to go on your way rejoicing and about the middle of the term be told that your money is out, and that, with the larger number of students to provide work for, the school cannot increase your opportuni-

ties, and therefore you will have to go out and work the rest of the term, has a way of reducing even a Senior to his lowest terms. This was the case with me, but help came almost as suddenly as hope vanished. A lady friend of the school who had a colored Sunday school class in New Jersey, heard of my condition through our pastor, Mr. Frissell, and with the help of her class sent the money for my board, so again my way was clear.

"The latter part of this, my Senior term, in 1882, a building was started near Virginia Hall for the Indian girls. Now came the question, at the end of my Senior term, as to where I should go to work after graduating. My ideal had all along been some school where the people were in a very low state of civilization, some out-of-the-way place where no one else would go. While I was picturing this log schoolhouse with no conveniences for teaching, much to my surprise I was asked to remain at Hampton after graduating and assist in training the Indian girls in their new home. I appreciated the compliment of being allowed to work at dear Hampton, but this was not the place I had been thinking of for five years and I did not find the question easy to answer. However, in the fall of 1882 I began, as a helper in Winona Lodge, a ten years' work for a people similar in many ways to my own, yet in others so different.

"The girls didn't understand English and I didn't understand Indian, so we had to have interpreters and when they were away use sign language, which was very practical in more ways than one.

"Having just finished school I was full of the theory and practice of teaching. Practice lived, but theory died a natural death. I had two classes in laundry work in the morning and two in the afternoon every day but Saturday. Getting the names of the pieces of clothes was hard at first; the girls saw no need of ironing any way. They would try ironing with a half-hot flat that would stick to the clothes, and the cold iron, instead of going back on the stove, often landed very decidedly in the back of the room. Sometimes as we stood side by side working away at the same piece of clothes, my wonder was which way the next iron would go. But with week in and week out practice they made marked improvement, not only in doing the work but in liking to do it, which goes a long way with them as with most people in everything attempted. A pleasanter work entrusted to me was the cooking and housekeeping instruction in the little Indian housekeeping cottage. Working side by side with another race helps us to grow large hearted, keeping ever before us Hampton's motto "Help one another." It is said by some that two people down can't help each other, but we say here two people rising together can help each other. Coming so much into personal contact with the Indian girls every day, I have learned something of their own feelings. They have often talked over with me plans for little homes like our little cottage at Hampton. The Indians are coming to a point where they wish to be

treated as men and women; not excused because they are Indians, but given a chance to stand side by side with other people and work out their own destiny.

"Being near the real life and soul of the work here, General Armstrong, whose zeal and earnestness of purpose overcomes every obstacle, is an inspiration better felt by the resident graduate than can ever be expressed. But the graduate does not always remain at Hampton, but sometimes is needed elsewhere. Now, after a stay of ten years as resident graduate, I have been asked by two of the Hampton teachers to go with them to the Black Belt of Alabama and assist in lifting the cloud of ignorance and superstition from my brothers and sisters there. I count nothing in my past life any more a blessing and privilege, much as I enjoy the home and work here, so with the experience, faith, and patience gained here I now say farewell to Hampton."

Before departing to her new far-off field, the faithful daughter had a small home built near the school for her mother, and never has failed to send from month to month something to pay for and support it.

"The Armstrong fire is spreading all through the South," said Booker Washington a year later, standing by General Armstrong's flag-draped bier.

Women's hands, fair and dark, had lighted that fire—still burning brightly—at Calhoun, Alabama, near its greater beacon at Tuskegee. For a year, Georgia Washington helped Mabel Dillingham and Charlotte Thorne to kindle it there. Then the impulse to carry it farther came to her also, and, with Godspeed from Calhoun and from Hampton, she bore the torch to a still darker center of the Black Belt, selected for her by Mr. Washington near the small village of Mt. Meigs, forty miles from Calhoun and twenty-five from Tuskegee, in a district whose black population outnumbered the white twenty to one.

"When I first saw it in 1893," said Georgia, "the village proper consisted of five grocery stores, four owned by white people and one by colored, a postoffice and two churches, one white, the other colored. Several white families owned beautiful old Southern homes in and about the village. I learned through the people that Mt. Meigs—the name spread over a broad district—received its name from one of the largest landowners living there many years ago, whose name was Meigs; but just why it is called *Mount* Meigs is an unsolved problem, for there is not a mountain to be seen anywhere. There is very little intemperance here in the way of drinking. The pastors all preach against it and no liquor is sold even at the village stores, where the people buy all their food. The white and colored people live and work on very friendly terms together, in mutual helpfulness." The relation between these last two facts suggests itself.

“The thing we long for, that we are,
For one transcendent moment”

sings the poet. If such a moment had once exalted Mount Meigs above its pancake flatness of prairie and marsh land, it had long vanished with the estate's ambitious misnamer. But a more effectual fervent aspiration was stirring the souls of some of his chattel's descendants when they framed a petition that the miracles they had seen wrought by a Tuskegee graduate at her school just beyond their children's reach, might be repeated for their benefit also. The answer to their prayer was Georgia Washington.

“The people at Calhoun,” she said, “were willing to be taught; the school was brought to them without their help, teachers furnished, salaries provided. At Mount Meigs the people thought of the school, sent for a teacher, promised a salary and an eight months' school. But when I went there in October I found the people busy picking cotton, and not a house for a school nor a place for the teacher to live had been provided or thought of. Indeed, only half of the people were willing to try for the new school. I took refuge for a week with the pastor's family. Finally a cabin, twelve by thirteen, was rented for two dollars a month, and here the school opened, October 9th, 1893. A quarter of a mile from it in another little one-room cabin with large cracks in it, I lived alone the first year, cooking my own food and paying four dollars a month for rent and washing. On Saturdays I taught sewing classes there and wrote letters to try to interest Northern friends in our work. On Sundays I talked to the people, and I held mothers' meetings to try to reach the women through the children. I was busy all the week. It was the hardest work I had ever undertaken but the most enjoyable. I was happier than ever before in my life. The Lord just walked before me and made the rough places smooth. I learned to have confidence in the seeming impossible.

“Four small boys made up the school the first month; then the children crowded the small house till it overflowed, and the pastor very kindly let us have the church house near by. It was over fifty years old and had creaking walls and broken windows. The room, one hundred feet by fifty, was heated by one stove which stood in the center and we shivered around it till February.”

“But by that time the people had built a small schoolhouse, eighteen by thirty-six feet, and had half paid for three acres of land around it. The white lady from whom they bought the land expressed hearty willingness to sell it for such a purpose. The money for making the first payment on it, and for the first load of lumber, was made up by the people, through small collections and suppers given by the women. The house was built by the fathers of children in the school assisted by one colored carpenter.

"Our enrollment for the first year had been one hundred children, representing thirty-five families. Though this was not a third of the children in the neighborhood, I was surprised at the number, for every child that came had to pay from fifty to seventy-five cents a month according to class. But the people were getting tired of the free school where most went, with its short three months' term and poor teaching, with, of course, no industrial training. They showed so much interest in the new opportunity and made so much effort and sacrifice for it that, though outside help had come to us, it seemed only fair as well as inspiring to name our new school as we did, the People's Village School. My only wish was for more than one tongue and one pair of hands and feet. I longed for one of the trained girls from Hampton to join me in the work."

Not one only, but three of the Hampton girls answered this call the second year, and shared the hardships of the one-room cabin till driven out of it by malaria and the doctor's orders, to take up their quarters in the new schoolhouse, while the school, doubling in size, had overflowed once more into the old church. The nearest public school had been merged into the new enterprise, by popular consent.

One bright spring day of 1895, an early train from Montgomery on the "Sam Road," as the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery Railroad is disrespectfully called, deposited two visitors from Hampton Institute, while the morning air was still sweet and dewy, at the crossroad station of Scotia. No house was in sight, but two diminutive top buggies with steeds to match were waiting at a safe distance from the tracks, and two small colored boys advanced with smiling countenances to announce themselves "Miss Washington's scholars come to fetch de ladies." In their separate chariots a pleasant quarter of a mile brought them to the People's School. The old church and new schoolhouse, standing in the shade of a few trees in a clearing, made a picture to which Miss Georgia, Richetta, Lizzie, and Azalie, waving welcome from the porch of the latter, put a finishing touch. The one long room was neat as wax and flooded with air and sunshine. Flowers were in the windows, Hampton photographs on the board walls, and the four little cots, made up with the precision and neatness of officers' quarters on a man-of-war, took nothing from the invitingness of the table spread with snowy cloth and a smoking hot breakfast for the two guests, at the other end of the room. The girls showed with pride the tiny kitchen which they had succeeded in annexing to the house just in time for their visitors' coming.

Meanwhile, the old church bell was clanging a summons not only to the children but to their parents to meet their teachers' teachers. Not all could spare a half-day from their spring plowing, but, though the country looked to strangers' eyes almost uninhabited, people old and young gathered from somewhere, as if they sprang out of the ground, till there was quite an audience. While they were collecting, there

was time to talk with individuals. . Here was a woman who had solved her own Negro problem by doing her own hoeing, plowing, and ditching. "I'll do everything but ditchin'," said a weary, broken-down sister near her, whose field work, like that of many, had been under other compulsion. "Well, I does my own ditchin' with my own arm. See that!" said the first, stretching out one of Amazonian development. "Made my first husband save up his earnin's till he had most enough to buy a farm, and then I showed him \$200 more I'd put by without his knowin', by selling eggs and chickens and doin' washin' fo' de white folks—and we bought a farm. It's mine now. I owns a good house and eighty acres all paid for—and now I'm makin' my second husband save his earnin's," and she waved the managerial arm toward a wiry little man whose courage was certainly to be respected.

In the old church, opening exercises were held, and the children sang plantation songs. Then classes were formed in their respective corners and the visitors and proud parents made the rounds; first to the noisiest corner where the little primaries, tiptoe with excitement, were adding and subtracting "cabbages," "watermelons," and "potato vines" in the "garden" Azalie had laid out on the blackboard, and last to the quarter-section Lizzie had transplanted to the Teachers' Home for their lesson in patchwork. After a short session the school was called together to hear what their Hampton visitors had to say to them. Then one after another of the parents, including two intelligent ministers, told of the condition and needs of the people, and expressed their gratitude to their teachers—"we certainly does love them"—and their determination, pathetic in view of the sacrifices it would involve, to start a new and larger school building. "If every man and woman of us who *can* give a dollar, *will* give a dollar, we shall have our schoolhouse," said one man, pledging his part. To get a dollar and spare it from their scanty earnings would mean hard work and short rations for many of them, but dollars so given become reproductive.

A board of trustees was incorporated to conduct the business of the new enterprise. The school's white neighbors had always been friendly and two of them became members of its board. One of these lent it money at the legal rates to save it from the usurious ones commonly demanded of such borrowers. Some of the colored men gave their own land as security. Some of the women rented a few acres and raised cotton to help the work. Help came also from the North to those thus helping themselves. Said one of the colored trustees—an old man who had five children in the school and who could neither write nor read himself, but was universally respected by both races in the community—"Our friends have assisted us and God will bless them for it; now we must do more on our part. Every night I pray God for this house, and I believe He is going to give it to us."

When the third term opened, there it stood—the nice, new, two-

story schoolhouse, with three recitation rooms on the first floor, assembly hall and sewing room on the second, furnished for use, with porches front and back; all shining within and without in its fresh paint; a crowning glory and a beacon light. Its influence upon the community can hardly be estimated. The eyes of both the colored and the white people were upon the work. No colored man had ever aspired to paint his house before. Everyone tried to thereafter. Every mother felt that the children must be clean and mannerly to go to that school. Every pupil approached it with pride and reverence. The women who had been used to go to the village store with bare feet and gowns tied up and smoking a pipe, felt that they must tidy up to pass their new schoolhouse. The contrast doomed the dilapidated church. Its members tore down the old wreck and with their own hands, assisted by the colored carpenter, rebuilt and painted it in decent style.

Four years later, with Northern help to the struggling community, the last dollar was paid on the schoolhouse. In a meeting of thanksgiving to God for this great blessing, ten dollars were collected toward the purchase, for a school farm, of twenty-four acres adjoining the three already owned. The first payment of one hundred dollars was made by the people of the village. A mule and necessary implements were furnished by a Northern friend; the boys on their work days plowed and planted it and made a garden. Two young men students cared for it through the summer, and the next fall the first bale of cotton from it was sold in Montgomery.

In addition to their classroom work, to extend the school's training to the homes, to improve the girls and the women, to give the boys some interest in better ways of farming and living, to encourage the men's land buying and home building companies started under inspiration of the Tuskegee Conference, Georgia Washington and her little band of helpers from Hampton and nearer home, have counted essential parts of their mission to Mount Meigs. Its details might fill a volume. Some of its results in fourteen years are thus summed up by Miss Washington:—

“The old plantation land on which the women and children were picking cotton when I came here in 1893, is now the property of the people and makes up our school grounds and farm. They say it has never brought forth such crops as ours since or before the war. Worked by the students under a foreman from the community for six years, and for the last year under a more experienced one, it is beginning in a small way to help defray our running expenses. Besides the ten bales of cotton picked yearly by the school children and sold in Montgomery, it supplies eggs and vegetables, chickens and pork, for our table, and some vegetables for sale. We rent ten acres besides for corn and other stock feed. This gives plenty of work for our two mules.

"The aim of the People's Village School is to prepare young men and women in simple, practical ways to go back to their homes and improve their communities, to give them a start and a taste for better things. Our studies are elementary. Bright and capable students we try to push forward to Hampton or Tuskegee or other schools, to have them fitted to be teachers and leaders of our people along all lines. Twenty-nine young men and women have completed our course in the thirteen years. Of this number eighteen have since attended normal and industrial schools: Tuskegee, three; Montgomery, three; Huntsville, Ala., one; Hampton Institute, eleven. Five of our graduates are teaching in public schools of the state; three have married.

"The close of our thirteenth year, 1906, showed an enrollment of 191 students and 7 teachers, one of them an industrial teacher. Of the 191 pupils, 60 from distant points of our own or other counties boarded in the neighborhood; 18 girls and 3 young men, on the school grounds. The parents urge us to take their girls into the home for training. Every pupil paid in advance four dollars tuition fee for the seven months' schooling.

"The boys cut the wood and make the fire and work on the farm; the girls cook the food and attend to the housework, under instruction. The sewing room has furnished lessons to a great many women and girls, and has helped in various ways to aid and improve their own homes. Provision for such instruction has been made by Northern friends.

"Our academic work has been improved and organized in seven grades. The cabin where I first lived here, we now own; it stood on the land we bought. Repaired and painted, we use it for our kindergarten and primary class. The teacher uses whatever she can find in the way of kindergarten material, such as shoeboxes for cardboard, manila and newspaper for paper folding, colored paper and pictures from the village grocery store, and some from barrels and boxes sent us.

"Though we mourn the death of our kind white friend and trustee, Dr. J. C. Nicholson, our board still includes two Southern white gentlemen of Mt. Meigs and Montgomery; also Dr. Booker T. Washington, Mr. F. D. Banks, a graduate and the head bookkeeper of Hampton Institute, who is our treasurer, and five colored men of good standing in our neighborhood.

"The whole community has changed in so many ways that I cannot begin to name them. I can only be thankful for what part the school has had in it. The Mt. Meigs Land Company, which I found just starting in 1893, divided, in 1902, its paid-for plantation of three hundred and twenty acres among its members, and many have raised good crops and built comfortable homes on their portions. The spirit of land buying is still alive. A new "Community Club" has been organized for the purpose of buying land and building houses, which, while we are not responsible for its working, we do all we can to en-

courage. Our mothers' meetings are still kept up. The barrels of clothing, new and old, sent by friends, have been a great help to them. The women of the village have always shown strong, practical interest in the school. In the summer of 1903, the mothers formed clubs to raise the next year's tuition fees in advance by taxing every man and woman a dollar during the cotton picking season when money is least scarce.

"Our daily morning inspection before entering school has touched every home, near and far, from which our pupils come. The order is that everyone must be clean and whole-clothed, with hair combed and face washed. Even the boys, after a little training, are expected to sew on buttons and patch as well as clean their clothes. The old excuse that 'Mother hasn't time to do it' is no longer taken. One of them, on finishing his course in the school, said: 'My early home was a small log hut. There were nine of us in the family in its one room. Life to me then was one long play day. Oh, the fun of an all-night coon hunt and the dinner next day! Now, life seems more real and earnest. The day is filled with business. School means more than one book and two recitations a day. As lessons and books have multiplied so have responsibilities. I find that with even just a little education come many cares. But then comes a feeling of wanting to help my people who are in the dark as I once was—'Eyes to the front' is the order of the day.'

"Our school property, including furnishings of farm and buildings, is valued at \$6000. No indebtedness hangs over this property at present, except for current expenses.

"God has done great things for us. He has wrought miracles on some of the rough material found here. His unseen power is still strengthening the weak."

Has Georgia's investment paid? She leaves the question with you.

